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# Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 TRSE-00 /060 W
----------172044Z 046284 /73
R 171747Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4673
INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PFOR, IT
SUBJECT: CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS REVIVE NATIONAL YOUTH MOVEMENT

SUMMARY. THE DC YOUTH MOVEMENT HELD ITS FIFTEENTH NATIONAL CONGRESS IN BERGAMOM MAY 13-15, TO SELECT A NEW NATIONAL COUNCIL. THE MEETING WAS UNUSUAL IN SEVERAL RESPECTS, BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY BECAUSE IT SIGNIFIED THE END OF THE TWO-YEAR TUTELAGE OF THE YOUTH MOVEMENT BY THE PARTY'S NATIONAL DIRECTORATE. THE OLD COUNCIL HAD BEEN DISSOLVED WHEN ITS LEFT-WING "BASE" FACTION DIRECTORATE PROVED TOO "UNCONTROLLABLE." THE BERGAMO CONGRESS THEREFORE TOOK PLACE IN A STAGE-MANAGED ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH CORRIDOR FACTIONAL POLITICS PREVAILED. THE DELIBERATIONS (WHICH REAFFIRMED THE PARTY'S POLICY LINE OF CONFRONTO TOWARD THE PCI) WERE LARGELY OVERSHADOWED BY THE UNUSUALLY HEAVY PARTICIPATION OF PARTY LEADERS--MORO, ZACCAGNINI AND ANDREOTTI. PARTY RENEWAL TOOK A BACK SEAT TO PARTY UNITY AS FACTIONAL PARTY "COLONELS" NEGOTIATED ACCEPTANCE OF A UNITY LIST FOR THE NEW NATIONAL COUNCIL WHICH CAREFULLY RESPECTED RELATIVE
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FACTIONAL PARTY STRENGTHS. MARIO FOLLINI, A YOUNG MOROTEO JOURNALIST, IS EXPECTED TO BE ELECTED NATIONAL YOUTH DELEGATE WHEN THE NEW COUNCIL CONVENES IN A FEW WEEKS' TIME, CONFIRMING THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE ZACCAGNINI DC-LEFT LINE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE DC NATIONAL YOUTH CONGRESS WAS UNUSUAL IN A

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NUMBER OF RESPECTS. MOST IMPORTANTLY, IT SIGNIFIED A RETURN TO NORMALCY BY SELECTING A NEW NATIONAL COUNCIL WHICH WILL MEET SHORTLY TO ELECT A NEW NATIONAL YOUTH DELEGATE. THE OLD COUNCIL, ELECTED AT PALERMO IN 1974, WAS DISSOLVED TWO YEARS AGO WHEN ITS LEFT-WING BASE FACTION LEADERS PROVED UNCONTROLLABLE. SINCE THEN, A NATIONAL COMMISSARIAT REPRESENTATIVE OF ALL THE DC'S FACTIONS HAS RUN THE YOUTH MOVEMENT WITH A MANDATE TO RESTORE ORDER. THE BERGAMO CONGRESS GAVE THE APPEARANCE OF HAVING BEEN CAREFULLY STAGE-MANAGED BY THE PARTY'S FACTIONAL LEADERS, AND IT WAS UNDOUBTEDLY NOT ACCIDENTAL THAT THE ACCENT WAS ON MODERATION AND UNITY RATHER THAN RENEWAL.

2. THE INTEREST OF DC LEADERS IN SEEING THAT THE YOUTH MOVEMENT GOT OFF TO A ZSAFE " START MAY EXPLAIN THE UNUSUAL PRESENCE OF MANY OF THE DC'S "BIG GUNS." PARTY PRESIDENT MORO PROVIDED THE MAIN ADDRESS ON OPENING NIGHT; SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI SPOKE ON SATURDAY; PRIME MINISTER ANDREOTTI DID THE HONORS ON SUNDAY. THEIR SPEECHES GRABBED THE HEADLINES AND, IN EFFECT, DOMINATED THE PROCEEDINGS. ALTHOUGH ALL THREE TALKED ABOUT SOME OF THE MOST PRESSING PROBLEMS OF YOUTH (ANDREOTTI, IN PARTICULAR, REFERRED TO THE DISCUSSION AT LONDON ON UNEMPLOYMENT), THE PRESENT NEGOTIATIONS FOR A "PROGRAMMATIC ACCORD" PROVIDED THE COMMON THEME. AT THE END , THE CONGRESS RESOUNDINGLY APPROVED THE DC'S POLICY OF A "COURAGEOUS CONFRONTO" TO SEEK AGREEMENT ON SPECIFIC, OPERATIVE SUBJECTS
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WITHOUT ENTERING INTO ENTAGLING, NEW POLITICAL ALLIANCES. THE SPEECHES BY MORO, ZACCAGNINI, AND ANDREOTTI WERE NOTEWORTHY FOR THEIR CONSISTENCY OF VIEW, DIFFERING ESSENTIALLY ONLY ON THE ACCENTS. THUS, MORO CALLED FOR RESPECT FOR THE DC'S "DIFFERENCES AND DIGNITY" IN TERMS THAT EVOKED HIS STIRRING LOCKHEED SPEECH, AND ANDREOTTI STRESSED THE ACHIEVEMENTS AND PROGRAMS OF THE GOVERNMENT.

3. BOTH MORO AND ZACCAGNINI CALLED FOR UNITY, AND CERTAINLY, ON THE QUESTION OF ATTITUDES TOWARD THE PCI, THE DC YOUTH APPEARED UNANIMOUS IN THEIR REJECTION OF ANYTHING SMACKING OF THE HISTORIC COMPROMISE. WHAT SOME OBSERVERS DEFINED AS A "LEFT ANTI-COMMUNISM" PERMEATED THE DEBATE. MANY SPEAKERS SUBSCRIBED TO A VAGUE ANTI-CAPITALISM, WHILE CALLING FOR CLEAR, POLITICAL DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN THE DC AND THE PCI. PROBLEMS OF PARTY RENEWAL AND REFORM WERE COUCHED IN IMPLICITLY ANTI-COMMUNIST TERMS. THE DELEGATES

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CLEARLY REGARDED THE PCI AS THE ONLY OTHER PARTY THAT MATTERS. THE DEBATE REVEALED CONTINUING DEEP ANTIPATHY FOR THE SOCIALISTS WHO WERE EITHER RIDICULED OR IGNORED. THE PSI YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE WAS JEERED THROUGH HIS SPEECH, POSSIBLY IN RETALIATION FOR THE SIMILAR TREATMENT GIVEN THE DC OBSERVER AT THE RECENT PSI YOUTH CONGRESS IN BOLOGNA, WHILE THE PCI REPRESENTATIVE WAS RECEIVED POLITELY.

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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 TRSE-00 /060 W
----------172044Z 046456 /73
R 171747Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY ROME
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INFO AMCONSUL FLORENCE
AMCONSUL MILAN
RUFLSKAAMCONSUL NAPLES 3726

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4. NOTWITHSTANDING ZACCAGNINI'S WARNING NOT "TO LET ANYONE USE YOU," THE CONGRESS WAS PLAYED OUT IN THE CORRIDORS, ADJACENT HALLS AND NEARBY HOTEL ROOMS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULES OF DC FACTIONAL POLITICS. ALTHOUGH THE BASE GROUP (30 PER CENT OF THE DELE-GATES) HELD OUT FOR SEPARATE SLATES UNTIL WELL AFTER MIDNIGHT ON SUNDAY, NATIONAL "CORRENTI" LEADERS IN THE END PREVAILED UPON THEIR YOUTH FACTIONS TO ACCEPT THE PREARRAGNED "UNITY SLATE." THE LIST, WHICH WAS NOT VOTED BUT MERELY PRESENTED TO THE CONGRESS, RECONFIRMED THE PREDOMINANCE OF THE DC-LEFT ZACCAGNINI GROUP, IN WHICH THE RECALCITRANT BASE ELEMENT IS TEMPERED BY FORZE NUOVE AND MOROTEI. THE FACTIONAL BREAK-DOWN OF THE NEW COUNCIL PROVIDES BASE WITH 16 SEATS, FORZE NUOVE 12, DOROTEI 9, FANFANIANI 7, MOROTEI AND COLOMBIANI 5 EACH, RUMOR 3 , COMUNIONE E LIBERAZIONE 2 AND ANDREOTTIANI ONE. THE COUNCIL IS EXPECTED TO ELECT A MOROTEO, MARIO FOLLINO, AS NATIONAL DELEGATE

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OF THE MOVEMENT.

5. THE CONGRESS APPROVED NO DOCUMENT OR SPECIFIC PARTY
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LINE. IT LEFT THESE DUTIES TO AN ORGANIZATIONAL
ASSEMBLY WHICH WILL BE CONVENED IN JUNE TO AGREE ON A
POLITICAL AND PROGRAMMATIC PLATFORM FOR THE RENEWAL OF
THE YOUTH MOVEMENT. TO DATE, THE ONLY SIGNIFICANT
REFORM MEASURE IS THE LOWERING OF THE MAXIMUM
MEMBERSHIP AGE TO TWENTY-FIVE.

6. COMMENT: THE DC YOUTH MOVEMENT HAS TRADITIONALLY
SERVED AS A FINISHING SCHOOL FOR YOUNG DC LEADERS
IN THE PROCESSES OF FACTIONAL POLITICS RATHER THAN AS A
POPULARLY-BASED YOUTH ACTIVITY. SOME 330,000 STRONG,
THE DC YOUTH ARE VIRTUALLY ALL STUDENTS. THERE ARE
FEW WOMEN AND FEWER WORKERS. IT REMAINS TO BE SEEN
WHETHER THE DC YOUTH ORGANIZATION CAN BECOME A VITAL
FORCE FOR PARTY RENEWAL, OR WHETHER IT WILL SIMPLY
REMAIN A SPAWNING GROUND FOR FACTIONAL PARTY LEADERS.
THE CATCALLS AND JEERING THAT GREETED THE ANNOUNCEMENT
OF THE UNITY SLATE MAY BE HEALTHY PORTENTS OF CHANGE.
THE COMMITMENT OF MANY OF THE DC'S YOUTH TO PARTY
RENEWAL IS STILL STRONG, AS EVIDENCED BY THE RESOUNDING
AND ENTHUSIASTIC OVATION AND RECEPTION GIVEN ZACCAGNINI
BY THE DELEGATES. IT IS TO BE HOPED THAT NOW THAT
THE DC YOUTH MOVEMENT HAS BEEN PUT BACK ON ITS FEET,
THAT THE PARTY DID NOT PAY TOO HIGH A PRICE FOR
MODERATION AND ORDER. MANY OF THE DELEGATES
UNDOBTEDLY WENT HOME DISILLUSIONED. HOPEFULLY,
OTHERS WILL REMAIN TO TAKE UP ANDREOTTI'S CHALLENGE
TO GO INTO BATTLE AS "ACTIVISTS IN THE SCHOOLS, THE
FACTORIES, THE FIELDS, AND THE TRADE UNIONS."
BEING "ABSENT IS ALWAYS WRONG," ANDREOTTI SAID,
"AGNOSTICISM IS A FABLE."GARDNER

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# Message Attributes

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**Disposition Approved on Date:**
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**To:** STATE
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